

The House has passed the Local Community Radio Act on a voice vote. The bill would clear the way for potentially hundreds of new low-power FMs by requiring the FCC to do away with its third-adjacent minimum separation requirement for most FMs.

Bill co-sponsor Lee Terry (R-NE) said on the House floor last night that he believes the bill will "revolutionize what Americans hear on the radio," adding that "LPFM offers people at the local community level the opportunity to broadcast when otherwise they may not afford to do so."

Terry cited the 2003 MITRE study on LPFM and said, "Now we definitively know that there will be no interference caused by reducing the required separation between new LPFM broadcasts and existing full-power broadcasts."

The bill would also require the FCC to ensure that licenses are available to LPFMs as well as translators, based on "the needs of the community." The House version of the bill also eliminates a ban on former pirate operators' obtaining an LPFM license. A similar bill has been passed by the Senate Commerce Committee and is awaiting scheduling for a vote in the full Senate.

The NAB says it doesn't oppose or support the bill as it stands, though it would like to see some "tweaks" in the legislation

